UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.164/8
4 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AND
HIGHLY MIGRATORY FISH STOCKS
Organizational session
New York, 19-23 April 1993

STATEMENT MADE BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE AT THE CLOSING OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION HELD ON 23 APRIL 1993

During the past week we have completed the organization of the Conference by electing a Chairman and other officers, with the exception of one Vice-Chairman, which we have deferred until the summer session. We have adopted the rules of procedure and the agenda for the Conference.

As regards the organization of work, the Conference was able to agree on how its substantive work will be carried out, and this is reflected in document A/CONF.164/3, to which your attention is drawn.

As part of the organization of work for the next session there is a request for the Chairman to prepare a paper containing a list of substantive subjects and issues as a guidance for the Conference. In this regard you would note that delegations are encouraged to send their suggestions to the Chairman by the end of May in order to facilitate the preparation of the paper.

The Conference has also agreed on its documentation requirements. The Secretariat has taken note of these requests and with the cooperation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) it is expected that the documentation will be made available to participants well in advance of the Conference in July.

Having completed the housekeeping part of the work during this session, we now have to look ahead to the substantive issues before the Conference.

The international community recognizes that there are long-standing problems relating to high seas fisheries, in particular with reference to straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks. These problems have now become urgent, hence the convening of this Conference. It is worth reminding ourselves that the international community has not only asked us to address these festering problems, but to collectively find effective solutions to them. In doing so, we are required to give full and faithful effect to the

provisions of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, so that high seas fishery can continue to produce maximum sustainable yield, having regard to the environmental, economic and other factors as provided for in the Convention.

I therefore urge you, during the period between now and the next session, to give thought to the substantive issues that we are to consider so that when we reconvene we can begin our work in earnest.

While it is natural that national, bilateral or subregional experiences influence our thinking on matters of substance, we must not overlook the fact that we are addressing the problems of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks from a global perspective and within the framework provided in the provisions of article 63, paragraph 2, article 65 and article 116, subparagraph (b), of the Convention. The solutions that we should seek, therefore, should be of global application, and at the same time adaptable to specific regional characteristics and circumstances.

During this organizational session our work has been carried out in a very positive, constructive and cooperative manner. The manner in which we resolved some difficult issues in our consideration of the rules of procedure, in my opinion, augurs well for the future of the Conference. I am confident that the spirit of compromise which was so amply demonstrated at the informal consultations on the rules of procedure and on the organization of our work will continue into the next phase of our work.

I thank you very much for the cooperation and assistance that you have rendered to me during this session. You have certainly made my task as the Chairman of this Conference much easier.

I wish those of you who are returning home a <u>bon voyage</u> and I look forward to working with all of you at the next session.

I also wish to thank the Secretariat for their valuable services.